

# Supervisor Romaine: Back to School Time Means Safety Awareness for College Student Off-Campus Housing

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**Farmingville, NY** – On Friday, September 8, Supervisor Ed Romaine (at podium) held a press conference in Stony Brook to generate awareness for student safety when living in off-campus housing. He was joined by (left to right) officials from the Town Law Department; Councilwoman Valerie Cartright (front row, left), Chief Deputy Town Attorney David Moran; Stony Brook Concerned Citizens president Bruce Sanders; Chief Fire Marshal Chris Merhman and Chief Deputy to the President of Stony Brook University Judy Greiman.

The Stony Brook community has experienced an increase in off-campus student housing over the past several years and many of the homes are not in compliance with Town Building and Fire Safety codes. Off-campus houses that are rented to students are required to have rental permits issued by the Town of Brookhaven, insuring that they have been inspected for safety, in compliance with all building and fire codes, and have the required smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors. Brookhaven Town has actively prosecuted unscrupulous landlords in the community who have illegally converted single family homes into “rooming houses” and Supervisor Romaine said that the Town will continue to make safety in off-campus housing a top priority by cracking down on those who are in violation of Town code. SUNY Stony Brook mandates that all off-campus housing listed with the University’s Office of Commuter Student Services and Off Campus Living be compliant with all Town codes and have a valid rental permit.

Supervisor Romaine said, “Off-campus housing that is not in compliance with Town Building and Fire codes threatens the health and safety of the students who reside there and the neighbors who live nearby. I thank Stony Brook University for their efforts to address this situation and for working with the Town and Stony Brook Concerned Citizens to fight illegal off-campus housing. I urge students and their parents to be vigilant and make sure that their housing complies with Town code. If they believe that it does not, the Town will investigate and take swift action against landlords who are in violation.”

Councilwoman Cartright said, “The safety and well-being of every resident in the First Council District has been one of my top priorities since taking office. To that end, I have sponsored several code amendments to increase the safety of renters and improve the quality of life for all residents of the Town of Brookhaven, all of which were unanimously adopted by the Town Board. We must hold Town Code violators responsible for their actions, and we must continue to look for new creative ways to address these issues for the safety of all Town residents, including Stony Brook University students. We must continue educating renters as to their rights so they can feel comfortable contacting Stony Brook University or the Town when there is an unsafe situation. I am confident that continuing to work together with our partners, the Stony Brook Concerned Homeowners, Stony Brook University and the students, we can ensure the quality of life all residents of the First Council District deserve.”

In 2013, Supervisor Romaine launched a mobile phone app to help fight illegal off-campus housing across Brookhaven Town. The app, which was the first of its kind on Long Island, allows residents to immediately report housing and property violations as they see them, helping to increase enforcement of housing codes within our communities. It is available for both Apple iPhones and Android mobile phones. With simple fill-in fields, drop down menus of violations and automated e-mail, this software application is a powerful weapon in the Town’s arsenal for addressing code violations, and improving the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

To download the free mobile app, residents must visit the Town’s website at [www.brookhaven.org](http://www.brookhaven.org) from a mobile

device. A pop up window will appear asking if they want to install the app. By clicking “yes,” they are directed to the market place where the app can be downloaded. It’s easy and takes only seconds to complete the download. Residents can also call 451-TOWN between the hours of 9:00 am to 4:30 pm to report housing violations.

**Division of Public Information \* Office of the Supervisor**

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